

AMENDMENT

In the claims:

Please delete claim 14.

Please amend claim 15 as follows (A marked-up and clean version of amended claim 15 is attached hereto as Exhibit A):

15. (Amended) A system for shipping a pet bed, said system comprising: a pet bed, said pet bed comprising a pillow, a carton for shipping said pet bed, said carton having a first end, said carton divided into a first compartment having a first compartment cross-section, and a second compartment having a second compartment cross-section, said first and second compartments accessible across their entire respective cross-sections at said first end, means for compacting said pillow to fit into said first compartment, said means for compacting said pillow comprising a bag dimensioned to receive said pillow, and a vacuum pump for connecting to said bag long enough to withdraw air therefrom once said pillow is enclosed in the bag, first means for sealing said first compartment across the entire first compartment cross-section when said pillow is enclosed therein, and second means for temporarily closing said second compartment across the entire second compartment cross-section.

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action dated November 13, 2002, the Examiner maintained and made final the rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b), or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a), as being anticipated or obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,890,648 to Cai or U.S. Patent No. 1,973,209 to Hooker. The Examiner also maintained and made final the rejection of claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hooker in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,746,317 to Keeton. With this communication, applicant has cancelled

rejected claim 14 and has amended claim 15 to include all of the limitations of claim 14, to clarify some possible ambiguities, and to include additional limitations to further distinguish the claimed invention from the cited prior art.

Amended claim 15 is patentable over Hooker, either alone or in combination with Keeton. Amended claim 15 requires that the first and second compartments of the container be accessible at the first end of the container across their entire respective cross-sections. This limitation is supported by Figures 1 and 6 of applicant's application.

Hooker teaches a rigid container formed by a single blank of cardboard folded into first and second compartments and a partition. The Examiner contends that Hooker "[t]each[es] cartons having first ends, and which are divided into first and second compartments which are simultaneously accessible at the first end." The Examiner further contends that access to the first and second compartments in the Hooker container are from the side. Keeton discloses a method of packaging a flexible foam article comprising placing the article in a substantially airtight bag and removing the air from the bag as the article is pressed into a rigid container.

The first and second compartments in Hooker are arranged in series or succession, with a partition 11 (Hooker Fig. 2) separating the compartments. The Examiner contends that the cut-out in the partition, defined by edges 18, 19 (Hooker Fig. 2), enables access to the first and second compartments at the first end of the container. However, in contrast to applicant's claimed system, the cut-out in Hooker does not enable access at the first end of the container to the second compartment across the entire cross-section of that compartment. Accessing the second compartment in Hooker across its entire cross section requires access at the second end of the container, but then the first compartment is not accessible across its entire cross-section at the second end of the container.

Further, amended claim 15 claims a pet bed, a vacuum pump and bag for receiving the pet bed. These limitations are neither disclosed nor contemplated by Hooker. Accordingly, Hooker does not render obvious amended claim 15.

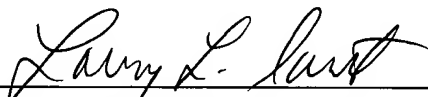
Likewise, the combination of Hooker and Keeton does not render amended claim 15 obvious. For the same reasons as described above, the Hooker-Keeton combination does not result in a system comprising a container with a first and second compartment, where the first and second compartments are accessible at the first end across their entire respective cross-sections, and a means for compressing a pet bed. Applicant further submits that amended claim 15 is patentable over the remaining prior art of record for the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that pending claim 15 is allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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